



Thornhill Junior & Infant School

Edge Lane, Thornhill, Dewsbury WF12 0QT

Tel: 01924 485638

Website: www.thornhilljschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Mr M Rowland

20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Following the announcement by the Education Secretary on Wednesday evening, I write to confirm that Thornhill Junior and Infant School will close on Friday 20th March until further notice. We will, however, be able to offer a **small number of emergency childcare places** (this is not education places) whilst we have the staffing levels to do so safely.

The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. **If children can stay safely at home, they should**, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. The fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

The School will endeavour to provide on-going emergency childcare to a **very limited** number of children over the period of the School closure. Eligibility will be based strictly on Government guidelines and available to children:

- who are considered to be vulnerable and currently have an Education and Health-Care Plan (EHCP), or have a social worker linked to the family for support (a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need plan or is a 'Looked After Child');
- whose parents are 'Key Workers' according to the official government list and all other attempts at childcare have failed*

The Government have asked Headteachers to use the following guidelines:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they **should be**.
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then childcare provision within the School setting may be available for them.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents (**over 70 years**), friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are **not mixing socially** in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.



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*Official List of Key Workers:

- *NHS and social care workers*
- *Education and childcare*
- *Key public services*
- *Local and national government*
- *Food and other necessary goods*
- *Public safety and national security*

Please refer to the guidance for clarity on your particular role, if you would be able to work from home a place may not be able to be offered if we have more requests than places.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

If you consider yourselves to be eligible for on-going emergency child care throughout this period of School closure, you should complete the application form attached to this letter. Please note that you will only qualify for on-going emergency childcare if the School is satisfied that you meet the criteria outlined above. You will be notified of the School's decision by 6pm tonight. **You should only send your child to School if you have been offered a place.**

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to my amazing staff. I am very mindful that, as Headteacher, I have a huge responsibility to keep both my pupils and staff safe at all times.

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding in this very difficult time for us all.

Kind Regards

Mr M Rowland
Headteacher